



enemy.

I thought back to my days of training, when the A.I. that taught us strategy and knowledge of the origin of our name, SPARTANS. The battle of Thermopylae, where King Leonidas of Sparta led his three-hundred mighty Spartan warriors to certain death at the hands of the Persian God-King Xerxes. I remember learning how three-hundred brave Spartans went to battle, yet only one returned.

I thought back to the battle of Pegasi Delta. Where I was deployed during Operation: TORPEDO to destroy the Covenant fuel deposit after three-hundred SPARTAN-IIIs of Beta Company. Much like the battle of Thermopylae, the three-hundred were against a foe more powerful than they could beat and only two walked away, victorious but scarred, physically and psychologically. Two-hundred-ninety-eight of the original deployed were killed during the assault. Their bodies burned and broken by the Covenant. I was sent in two days after the first assault as support for the one-hundred-forty-five that remained. Thom, Lucy and I made it out, barely. Victor and Michael died detonating the C9 on the reactors and Charlie sacrificed himself to save us and give us a chance to survive. Two SPARTAN-IIIs survived, though they were forbidden to speak of it, though Lucy never would speak again. It was highly classified that any of us were there, especially me. I was more of a hyper-lethal vector than a soldier, before I was assigned a team. NOBLE. And now, all they are, are bodies lying in the fires of Hell as the Covenant burn Reach and hunt the survivors.

Less than two-thousand people are reported alive in areas where the Covenant cannot invade. Areas like CASTLE Base and DEFIANT Base, the SPARTAN-II training camp. There, all remaining refugees and surviving UNSC forces are en route to DEFIANT Base. I was searching for a beacon of a surviving SPARTAN-III for a rendez vous to wait for an evac. When I arrived I discovered the SPARTANS armor locked and the soldier deceased. I walked around for a while, checking the bodies of both the SPARTANS and Army Troopers, confirming their deaths and tucking their dogtags in my Tactical/SOFT CASE on my left thigh.

I watched as several Covenant Corvettes flew overhead flanked by T-26 GSA Banshees, T-28 TC Spirits and T-52 TC Phantoms. A few times I saw a few T-31 XMF Seraphs fly overhead, surprising me. Several times I ducked into the ruins of a building to hide from Covenant Recon teams. And then it happened.

I was surrounded by Covenant Phantoms and enemies. I was standing on a platform with several M247H Heavy Machine Guns. There was a SPARTAN-III hanging off the edge, deceased and surrounded by spent casings from one of the HMGs. I took the MA37 from the ground next to him and took his dogtags, for a moment I thought he moved, but declared it just my head. I looked up and saw the T-52 TC Phantom descending and the T-26 GSA Banshees circling above my head. I knew I was doomed.

â€|\*\*Some Time Laterâ€|\*\*

I lay on the ground, the Covenant forces leaving the area under command of the Elite Field Marshalls and Zealots. The Covenant leaving the bodies of their dead. My left arm lay across my abdomen, where the dagger had penetrated my armor and burned into my gut. I was in pain, but couldn't risk moving because of how close the Elites

were to me. In the background, I could hear the Emergency Beacon in my helmet going off and growing stronger. The beacon was beeping louder and a nearby Grunt picked it up, looking at the broken visor and trying to find the location of the sound. He held it up to an Elite Officer and when the Elite heard the sound he warbled something to a Major and handed it to him.

He kept looking from the helmet to me and back. Trying to figure out what was going on. He looked directly at me and tossed my helmet to the ground, activating the Energy Sword on his right thigh with a violent flick of his wrist. He stomped closer to me and I could hear the sizzle of the plasma in the blade as he approached. Then there was a loud crack and the Elite's crown exploded in a purple flash, splattering the surrounding area with his blood and brain matter and ripping his helmet off of his head. His sword fell from his hand and deactivated. When his body hit the ground, I leapt up and grabbed the hilt, activating the blade and thrusting the blade into a Field Marshall's abdomen. I ripped it from his body and took the one from his left thigh and activated it, crossing them across my chest and casting a menacing blue aura on my scarred face, sending the surrounding Grunts running away in terror. I spun and slashed at the Elites around me, cutting two of them down. I charged forward and leapt over a broken barricade and cutting down four more enemies. As I ran, I noticed that the SPARTANs I presumed were dead were standing up and unlocking their armor, grabbing their weapons from the ground and joining the fight against the Covenant in the area. Overhead, the Banshees exploded and the Phantoms went down like flies and several UH-144 Falcons and D77-TC Pelicans appear taking down the enemy aircraft. A Pelican hovers over the head fires the machine guns on the enemies, ripping them apart and splattering blood everywhere. I swung at an Elite Zealot and he ducked, swinging up and catching me across the chest, luckily only penetrating to the bodysuit underneath. I still went down and surely would've been killed if it had not been for the SPARTAN that was on the turret riser above us.

"I'll expect my dogtags back Noble, so get up and take a gun." The SPARTAN said to me, grabbing my forearm and pulling me up. I took one of the turrets another SPARTAN dropped to us and began firing, ripping through the retreating Covenant forces. When the last Elite fell, the soldiers around us began cheering. The Pelicans and Falcons landed and the men and women inside began helping the wounded inside and grabbed the bodies of the fallen Army troopers.

"Lieutenant, good to see you again." A SPARTAN said as he walked up to me and took off his helmet.

"Gauntlet team?" I asked, looking at the distinguishing markings on his hand casings and forearm guards. He nodded and smirked.

"How'd you guess?" I rolled my eyes and shook his hand, noticing the plasma damage on his armor.

"So, what was with the possum strategy?"

"We'll let Admiral Pentecost tell you that el-tee," he looked me over. "But first, you'll need some new armor."

\*\*TO BE CONTINUEDâ€¦\*\*

End  
file.